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FIRST LOVE.

SET SCENE.—*Representing a handsome parlor in the house of Mr. LIVINGSTONE. Door in c. open, admitting view of landscape. Doors R. and L. Profusion of furniture, but the middle of stage should be clear. R., a table with writing-materials and a bell.*

Present, LIVINGSTONE and EMILY seated at table, R.

LIVINGSTONE (R.). Now do tell me, my dear child, what is the matter with you? Why are you in such low spirits?

EMILY (L.). I am sure I don't know, papa; but everything seems to go wrong, and I feel quite downhearted.

LIVING. Really, this is very unreasonable, when every one in the house, including myself, do all we can to make you happy.

EMILY I know, papa, you are very kind, and love me dearly.

LIVING. Of course I do. How could it be otherwise when I am a widower, and you my only child? My dearest wish is to see you happy. I am now past fifty, and one of the richest men in the county; but I don't feel so strong as in former years, and naturally wish to see you comfortably settled in life before I die.

EMILY. Oh, papa, don't speak of dying.

LIVING. I hope to live a good many years yet; but, Emily, as you have already refused a dozen very suitable offers, I hope you will, at least, receive the young gentleman well whom I expect here to-day.

EMILY. Mr. Van Zandt, you mean? (*pouting.*)

LIVING. Exactly. When I came to this place, thirty years ago, his father took me into his employ, and treated me like one of his own children; and afterwards he enabled me to start in business on my own account. I may say I owe to him all that I possess.

EMILY. But I don't want to marry.

LIVING. Pooh, pooh, girls always do. They tell me he is a fine young fellow, good-looking and accomplished; has had an excellent education, and just returned from abroad. His mother and I have arranged all the preliminaries, and I am sure he will make you a good husband.

EMILY. Maybe, papa; but I feel it my duty, nevertheless, to refuse him.

LIVING. Your duty! what do you mean?

EMILY. A sacred promise which I made to another in my early youth.

LIVING. (*anxiously*) Sacred fiddlesticks! How dare you presume, miss, to fall in love without my permission? (*aside*) She is eighteen, and talks about her early youth!

EMILY (*coaxingly*) Now don't be angry, papa, and I'll tell you all. You know I was educated in your own house by my kind Aunt Jane.

LIVING. Aye, a very excellent woman who had only one fault, that she used to devour about three hundred and sixty five novels a year.

EMILY. It was from those beautiful books that she taught me to read; and you may perhaps remember, papa, that my cousin Charlie used to share my lessons with me.

LIVING. Charles! that young vagabond! a penniless orphan whom I took into my house out of charity. An ugly, useless loafer!

EMILY. Oh, papa, you don't mean what you say! He was so noble, so handsome, and so romantic. We used to play and read together. He called me Virginia, and I called him Paul.

LIVING. So much for leaving cousins together!

EMILY. Some years ago he went abroad, to be a clerk in Paris, but before he left, he said to me: "Emily, you are rich and I am poor. While I am away they will probably try to make you marry some wealthy man; because fathers are all unjust and tyrannical, at least those we have read about. Be firm, and promise me, my sweet love, to remain single until I return." I promised him I would, and then we exchanged rings, and swore each other eternal constancy.

LIVING. Ugh! How old were you then, miss?

EMILY (*sighing*). Eleven years, papa.

LIVING. Eleven! A very suitable age for swearing eternal constancy. Have you ever corresponded with him since?

EMILY. Never, papa. Only on moonlight nights——

LIVING. On moonlight nights?

EMILY (*dreamily*). Aye, when the pale disk was shedding its silvery lustre over the mountains; when the winds were murmuring, and the fountains were blending their sweet whispers——

LIVING. Well, never mind the winds and the fountains just now.

EMILY. When the feathered songsters——

LIVING. (*aside*). Drat the feathered songsters!

EMILY. Were warbling their last notes, and nature was wrapped in sweet repose, then gazing on the bright moon, I would think of my poor Charlie and his promise to do the same.

LIVING. I have no doubt he would be playing billiards, and smoking a short pipe. Well, after all, that was a very innocent way of carrying on a correspondence. Was there no other bond between you?

EMILY. Could there be a stronger and more holy one than that? A woman only loves once in her life, and the first impressions are never effaced from her mind. You will find that written in every novel. Oh, papa, do not force me to marry that odious Mr. Van Zandt. I hate him already; and feel so sick and weak. I am sure my health is giving way rapidly; I am not what I used to be. (*coughs, and lays her hand on her heart.*)

LIVING. (*alarmed*). Goodness me! my little darling. Don't fret, do you hear? (*aside*) What a brute I am! (*supports her to a chair*) There now, my own little pet. (*caresses her, making a fuss.*)

EMILY (*languidly*). Oh, papa, didn't you say Mr. Van Zandt was coming here to-day? (*coughs.*)

LIVING. (*fidgety*). Yes, yes; but you shan't see him if you think it would be too much for you. I'll write him a note and tell him you have got the measles, or the small-pox, or that a previous engagement, or something of that sort—(*aside*) I am in a regular fix.

EMILY (*as before*). Oh, yes, dear papa. It would be so much more polite, don't you see?

LIVING. Can't say I do; but I'll write nevertheless. (*sits down R. and writes.*)

EMILY (*recovers suddenly and looks slyly over his shoulder*). What a dear

old man you are, papa. That's it. Oh! what a beautiful letter; and what a splendid hand you do write, isn't it elegant! (*gayly*) Now we will send it away without delay. (*rings a bell*)

LIVING. (*rising*). I hate writing letters. But now look here, Miss. As for Charlie, that scamp—

EMILY (*kissing him*). Don't scold my poor cousin.

Enter PERKINS, c. from L.

EMILY. I feel already so much better, papa. (*to PERKINS*) There, Perkins, take this note at once to Mr. Van Zandt's country-house. You know it is only twelve miles from here. Mind you go at a full gallop, and come home as fast as you can, I have some more errands for you. And—stop—tell them down stairs we are not at home for anybody.

PERKINS. Very well, miss.

[*Exit, L.*]

LIVING. Well, then, I think I will go into my study and rest a little.

EMILY. I'll go with you, papa, and read to you, or sing, or do anything you please. Come. (*embraces him, and whirls him round*) Oh! I feel such a change for the better already.

[*Exeunt EMILY and LIVINGSTONE, R.*]

Enter PERKINS, L., fully equipped.

PER. (*holding the letter*). "Twelve miles at a gallop, and come back as fast as you can, for I have some more errands for you." Have you, miss? Yes, I dare say you have. Whenever she takes a fancy into her pretty little head, one has to run here and there and everywhere. I must confess she is very liberal, and gives me plenty of drink-money; but if I could invent a way of getting the money without doing the work, it would be all the better. (*retires towards c. and looks out L.*) Who is the gentleman coming this way? I never saw his face before. (*takes off his hat and bows.*)

Enter VAN ZANDT, c. from L.

VAN ZANDT (*to a person off stage*). You may put my horse into the stable; I shall stay here awhile. (*to PERKINS*) Is Mr. Livingstone at home?

PER. (*bowing*). He is not, sir. Didn't they tell you downstairs?

VAN Z. They said I would find him here.

PER. I beg pardon, sir; the fact is he is at home, but miss told me to say that he wasn't. And, you see, sir, we are all accustomed to obey her orders in preference.

VAN Z. Oh, indeed! (*aside*) People have told me about the old man's weakness for his only child. (*aloud*) That's all right, my good fellow; but look here, (*gives him some money*) I want particularly to see Mr. Livingstone. He expects me, and I hope you can manage it for me, eh?

PER. (*aside*). He is a real gentleman. (*aloud*) I'll try, sir. I'll tell one of the other servants to arrange it, because I am in a great hurry. I have to ride over to Mr. Van Zandt's house and deliver this note.

VAN Z. To Mr. Van Zandt's? I'll take it for you. I am going there in an hour or so. (*takes the letter.*)

PER. You are very kind, sir; that will save me a long ride. I will manage it so, sir, that you see Mr. Livingstone at once, without miss knowing about it. (*aside*) And I'll go into the kitchen to smoke a pipe, and fancy I am travelling incognito. [*Exit, c. to R.*]

VAN Z. This letter is for me. I know the old gentleman's handwriting although I have never seen him. (*opens the letter and reads*) By Jove! I didn't expect this.. "Previous engagement!" This is fine news for

a suitor. My mother wrote me, to return to this country as fast as possible, and said that Miss Livingstone was exactly the wife to suit me. (*short pause. Walks to and fro*) After all, what does it matter. I've never seen the girl. And yet, I don't like to be treated in this style. My mother says she is young, handsome, and very, interesting—only wants a little training. (*reads again*) "Mr. Charles Fox, her cousin, whom she has loved from childhood, and has not seen for seven or eight years." Seven years! She begins to amuse me. Now let me see. I have an idea that cou-ins sometimes change a good deal in seven years. I think I'll just pass myself off for that cousin and take the fortress by storm. Somebody is approaching—no doubt the old gentleman. I'll begin the game at once.

Enter LIVINGSTONE, R., same dress.

LIVINGSTONE (*bowing*). My servant told me that a stranger desired to see me. What is your pleasure, sir?

VAN Z. (*striking an attitude*). Ha! You do not recognize my features! Is it possible that I have changed so much in seven years. that my own relations do not know me?

LIVING Really, sir, I beg your pardon.

VAN Z. (*as before*). Is the voice of the blood a mere chimera? Does it not tell you, my beloved uncle, who I am?

LIVING. (*disgusted*). Oh, Lord! it is that rolling stone of a nephew of mine, Charles.

VAN Z. You are right, uncle, I am your fond, affectionate nephew, Charles. (*throws himself into the arms of LIVINGSTONE*)

LIVING. (*shakes him off*). Oh, indeed! (*aside*) I wish he were at the top of the Catskills.

VAN Z. Heavens! what ails you? are you not well?

LIVING. Oh, it is nothing; only surprise. The "voice of the blood," I suppose. I confess I should never have known you, Charles; you didn't promise to be such a good-looking fellow when you left us. (*aside*) She'll go crazy about him now.

VAN Z. (*shaking hands*). So much the better. You ought to be glad of that, uncle.

LIVING. (*dryly*). I can't say I am. I should have preferred quite the reverse.

VAN Z. I am astonished at you!

LIVING. Look here, my dear boy; relations ought to be candid with one another, and I will open my heart to you. You know I have taken care of you ever since you were a child. I have fed, clothed, and educated you, and even made you a very handsome yearly allowance.

VAN Z. Believe me I am deeply grateful. (*tries to embrace him.*)

LIVING. (*disgusted*). Don't bother! That sort of thing does very well on the stage, but you know we are not play-acting, just now.

VAN Z. (*aside*). I rather think I am.

LIVING. I'll double that allowance of yours, on condition that you depart at once, and that we deprive ourselves for three or four years more of the luxury of each other's society.

VAN Z. Ha! You want to turn me out of doors on the very day of my arrival? n—ever! (*strikes an attitude.*)

LIVING. Exactly. It is a melancholy fact, but I do. Now, Charles, look here; I take you for an honorable fellow, although you are—

VAN Z. Your nephew.

LIVING. Pshaw! I take you to be an honest lad, and will confide in you. You were brought up with my only daughter, and she has preserved a silly, romantic kind of attachment for you, which interferes

with my plans for her future happiness. It is the fondest wish of my heart to see Emily united to a certain Mr. Van Zandt, a very excellent young man, worth a dozen such fellows as you. You mustn't mind my being frank with you.

VAN Z. Oh, not at all, sir. (*aside*) The old boy is a trump!

LIVING. On your account, Emily has taken a violent dislike to Mr. Van Zandt and won't see him. Now, (*cunningly*) I have been thinking that if I could only get him introduced to her under a feigned name; and let him pay his addresses to her, then she might perhaps take a fancy to him. Don't you see? I flatter myself the idea isn't bad?

VAN Z. (*smiling*). Well. I think that might be managed, uncle.

LIVING. Do you really? But I don't know how; I am not accustomed to dissemble. She is as smart as a steel-trap, and would find me out at once.

VAN Z. Oh, indeed! (*aside*) I'm glad he told me.

LIVING. Now, my boy, you know exactly my position and yours; and the best thing you can do is to pack up your traps and be off at once. (*shakes hands and tries to force VAN ZANDT gently to go.*)

EMILY (*speaking from off stage, R*). Papa, papa dear, are you there?

LIVING. (*aside*). Ugh! Here she is; then there is an end to my scheming.

VAN Z. (*aside*). Now for it.

Enter EMILY, R., without seeing VAN ZANDT.

VAN Z. (*aside*). By Jove! She is a fine girl.

EMILY. There is a man downstairs, a German, who calls himself Zacharias. He insists on seeing you, and says that Cousin Charlie is on his way home, and may be expected to-day.

LIVING. (*aside*). The murder is out!

VAN Z. (*aside*). I shall be in an awful mess by-and-by.

EMILY. He desires to see you about a matter of importance concerning Charlie.

LIVING. (*off his guard, to VAN ZANDT*). Concerning you? (*aside*) Ugh! I have let the cat out of the bag.

EMILY (*agitated*). What did you say? who is this gentleman? (*points to VAN ZANDT*.)

LIVING. (*confused*). Only a New York tailor, my dear, come to take my measure for a pair of boots.

EMILY (*as before*). No, no; you deceive me, papa. Tailors do not make boots! Your trouble, your embarrassment! Oh, 'tis he! 'Tis Charlie! my own dear cousin. (*rushes into the arms of VAN ZANDT, who takes kindly to it.*)

LIVING. (*sinks into an arm-chair and fans himself*). She has recognized him; I knew she would.

VAN Z. I couldn't help it, uncle; the "voice of the blood" you know.

EMILY (*taking both the hands of VAN ZANDT*). And so you have come back at last. Let me look at you again. You are altered a good deal, Charles, and yet, no; it is the same smile, the same pensive brow. And how do you think I look?

LIVING. (*aside—disgusted*). There they go at it!

VAN Z. More lovely than ever. And so you knew me at once?

EMILY. I should have known you in a thousand. Just as I came into the room I felt a presentiment, I don't know why, but some one seemed to whisper to me: "He is here!"

LIVING. I never should have known him if he hadn't told me.

EMILY (*smiling*). You, papa? Ah! that is quite different. But there

are sympathies which never deceive; Aunt Jane could have told you all about that. But, papa dear, you quite forget the German gentleman who is waiting for you downstairs.

LIVING. (*rising*). I will go and see him. (*calls VAN ZANDT aside*) I say, Charlie, look here; "honor bright," you know. I leave you alone with your cousin; but you musn't make love to her; promise me that.

VAN Z. (*aside to LIVINGSTONE*). I'll try to make her fall in love with that Mr. Van Zandt of whom you were speaking.

LIVING. (*grasping his hand*). Bless you, my lad. If you succeed, I'll do something handsome for you.

VAN Z. (*as before*). Rely on me, uncle.

[*Exit LIVINGSTONE, C. to R., looking at them suspiciously.*]

VAN Z. (*aside*). The situation is rather peculiar for a first interview. (*approaches EMILY.*)

EMILY. (*draws him down on sofa, L.*). Come and sit here by me, Charles. And so you have returned for good? (*takes his hand.*)

VAN Z. As you see, Miss Emily.

EMILY. Miss Emily! What nonsense to call me Miss, me, your own little cousin!

VAN Z. I didn't know whether it would be quite proper now, to call you Emily.

EMILY. Why, certainly. It will remind us of our happy childhood. Do you remember how gay and contented we were in those days? And poor Aunt Jane! how we used to tease her?

VAN Z. To be sure. She must be very old now, poor lady?

EMILY. Old! How do you mean? Don't you recollect she died four years ago?

VAN Z. Of course I do. I only meant she would have been very old now, if she had been alive.

EMILY (*smiling*). Why! not so very old. Do you recollect our delicious rambles in the woods, and how we used to go to the farmhouse to bring the cream home. It was always you who drank the largest share of it.

VAN Z. I beg your pardon, it was you.

EMILY (*delighted*). He remembers everything! And one night, on our way home, when we were caught in a thunderstorm?

VAN Z. And got drenched to the skin?

EMILY. No we didn't; we found shelter in a cave. And do you remember what we did in the cave?

VAN Z. Not exactly. (*aside*) Ugh! What is coming now?

EMILY (*smiling*). We ate all the cream and strawberries we had brought for Aunt Jane.

VAN Z. So we did. (*aside*) I breathe again.

EMILY. And then you kissed me, you know, and called me your Virginia.

VAN Z. And you called me your Paul (*kisses her.*)

EMILY. What a memory you have! And then you kissed me again, and I scolded you, and said I would tell aunt. But of course I never did. I wasn't such a little goose.

VAN Z. I perfectly remember. And the next day, if I am not mistaken, I kissed you again?

EMILY. No, no. The next morning you went abroad, you know.

VAN Z. Did I (*as de* I am devilish glad I did.

EMILY. And when you said good-by, we swore each other eternal love, and promised always to go and look (*points upwards*) there, above.

VAN Z. (*confused*). To be sure, there, above. Oh, yes, up there, you know. (*aside*) What is she driving at now?

EMILY (*looking up*). I never failed to do so—not once. And you?

VAN Z. (*with pathos*) No, never! I assure you, my own pretty darling. (*aside*) I am an awful villain; but really it is so nice. (*more kissing*.)

Enter LIVINGSTONE, C. from R., suddenly.

LIVING. What do I see! Is this the way, Charles, you keep your promise?

VAN Z. (*rises in confusion. Aside to LIVINGSTONE*). Hush! It's all right, uncle. I was only making love, by proxy, for Mr. Van Zandt.

LIVING. (*angrily*). And I say it is all wrong, and I won't stand it. You have abused my confidence, and will have the goodness to depart this very day.

EMILY. How, papa! He has just arrived, and you send him away?

LIVING. It is for your own good, child; and for his too. What do you suppose Mr. Zacharias wanted; that man whom he pretends not to know?

VAN Z. I assure you, uncle, I never saw him.

LIVING. Then I'll tell you who he is. He is a common, old, grasping, hooked-nosed money-lender; and he held an acceptance of yours, which I paid him. Here it is (*gives him a bill of exchange*.)

VAN Z. (*taking the bill*). Is it possible? (*aside*) It appears my name is Charles Fox. It is as well to know it.

LIVING. Well, sir. What do you say to that?

VAN Z. It does look awfully like a promissory note.

LIVING. If there were only one, I would not mind it; but Mr. Zacharias told me I might expect to see five or six more of them coming home to roost.

EMILY. Oh, Charles! What do I hear? Have you become a spendthrift, a good-for-nothing?

VAN Z. It may appear so at first sight - but—

LIVING. And that isn't the worst of it. Mr. Zacharias alluded to another matter, a very serious piece of business, in which Charles is involved; but he wouldn't tell me what it was.

VAN Z. (*surprised*). A serious matter?

EMILY (*crying*). Merciful Heavens! Have you been robbing a bank, or smuggling cigars?

VAN Z. (*to EMILY*). I'll explain all to you in good time. (*aside*) I haven't the least idea of what it is.

EMILY. No. You must confess it all now, if you expect papa and me to forgive you.

VAN Z. I cannot now. Impossible!

EMILY (*offended*). I see how it is. You dissemble; you want to deceive us. Oh, Charles! formerly you never had any secrets from me, and now you are so changed. Is this honest? Is this what you promised on the day of your departure when you gave me this ring which I have always kept. (*shows her ring*.)

LIVING. Hooray; they are going to have a delicious row now.

EMILY (*takes VAN ZANDT'S hand*). And your ring! the one I gave you. Where is it?

VAN Z. (*confused*). My ring? Ah! I haven't got it here just now.

LIVING. (*delighted*). They will fall out now.

EMILY (*grieved*). Oh, Charles! You have given it to another. How could you? (*sobs*)

LIVING. (*as before*). Hi, hi, hi! He will catch it now.

EMILY (*dignified*). This is indeed unworthy. I could have forgiven

you everything else, your debts, your dissipation, all; but to part with my ring, never! It is all over between us now.

LIVING. (*shouting*). Bravo! (*claps his hands*.)

Enter PERKINS, C. from R.

PERKINS (*to LIVINGSTONE*). I beg pardon, sir; a young gentleman has just arrived, and there is nobody to receive him.

LIVING. Who can it be? Ah! it is Mr. Van Zandt, no doubt

EMILY (*to PERKINS*). Didn't you take the letter to Mr. Van Zandt's house?

PER. Yes, Miss—no Miss; that is to say, I didn't take it myself. This gentleman promised to deliver it. (*points to VAN ZANDT*.)

EMILY (*to VAN ZANDT*). Oh, dear! and you have kept it, Charles?

VAN Z. I am sorry to say, cousin, I have lost it.

LIVING. I am very glad of it. (*to PERKINS*) Show the gentleman in here, I'll see him immediately. It must be Mr. Van Zandt, my intended son-in-law.

[*Exit PERKINS, C. to L.*

VAN Z. (*aside*). The plot is thickening.

LIVING. Emily, go and put on another dress; it is important to look *comme il faut* on such an occasion. I'll go and put on my coat; and as for you, Master Charles, I won't detain you any longer. Pack up your things and be off.

[*Exit, R.*

EMILY (*to VAN ZANDT*). How annoying to have to dress, and receive a person whom I detest. I can thank you for all this, Charles. You have behaved cruelly towards me.

VAN Z. I beseech you, Emily, hear me!

EMILY (*angrily*). I'll hear nothing, you callous wretch; but I'll have my revenge. I'll try to please that Mr. Van Zandt. I'll make him fall in love with me, if I can, and marry him too, just to vex you. There!

[*Exit, R., sobbing.*

VAN Z. (*alone*). Whew! Here is a fine kettle of fish. First I fall out with the old man, then with the daughter, and succeed in making myself disagreeable to both of them. She is a very charming girl, and I am over head and ears in love. Hem! I won't give up the game yet. Of course, I might easily set things right by telling them my real name; but, no, that wouldn't do. I must first be sure that it is I whom she loves, and not that precious cousin, Charlie.

CHARLES appears in C. from L.

Somebody is coming; he seems to be an eccentric genius.

CHARLES (*speaking to PERKINS, off stage, L.*). All right, my dear fellow. Thank you, that'll do. (*advances down stage without seeing VAN ZANDT. Hat, cane and brown paper parcel*) I will take a little rest here. There is nothing more fatiguing than travelling on an empty stomach. (*sees VAN ZANDT*) Ah, I beg your pardon. Mr. Livingstone does not appear to be at home?

VAN Z. No, sir.

CHAS. Nor Miss Livingstone? (*throws hat, cane and parcel on table, L.*)

VAN Z. I believe not.

CHAS. So much the better. I am very glad of it, because I have to speak with both of them, and have not yet made up my mind what to say. Excuse me, sir, do you belong to the family?

VAN Z. Almost.

CHAS. Delighted to hear it; then I'll ask a favor of you. It may be a little indiscreet on my part, but between young men, you know.

VAN Z. I am at your service.

CHAS. Do you happen to know if a certain Mr. Zacharias, a distinguished German capitalist, of my acquaintance, has been here to-day?

VAN Z. Mr. Zacharias the moneylender has just left the house.

CHAS. Confound it! I wonder who gave him my uncle's address.

VAN Z. Your uncle? Are you Mr. Charles Fox?

CHAS. I am that much-to-be-pitied individual who, after an absence of seven years, returns home to the paternal roof of my maternal uncle, looking like a cheap edition of the prodigal son. (*shows his parcel*) Circumstances over which I have had no control, have reduced my luggage to a tooth-brush, two paper collars, and a pair of old boots. (*aside*) Both to the left foot, by the way. (*aloud*) I had hoped to arrive here before my reputation, and travelled all the way from New York without my breakfast. Alas, only to find myself outwitted by that confounded old Jew.

VAN Z. Mr. Zacharias! the distinguished capitalist?

CHAS. Capitalist! that was only intended as a capital joke, you know. I suppose that rascal has prejudiced the family against me?

VAN Z. He presented a promissory note of yours, which your uncle paid. Here it is. (*gives CHARLES the note.*)

CHAS. (*looks at the note*). Is it possible? The dear, noble-hearted old boy! Aye, this is one of my autographs, to be sure; but, unfortunately, only one. Heigho! the family is more numerous than respectable!

VAN Z. So I have heard.

CHAS. And, pray, what did uncle say about that other matter; the Canadian business; does he know about it as yet?

VAN Z. No, nor I either.

CHAS. You don't? Then do me the favor not to divulge the secret to anybody. I may get out of that difficulty, if I play my cards well; I am not without brains, and as for brass—I mean in an abstract sense—I flatter myself I am a match for anybody. There are several ways to soften the heart of a despotic uncle. I wish I could only manage to get introduced to him under a feigned name, and work the business incognito.

VAN Z. Shall I give you a bit of advice?

CHAS. I ask for nothing better.

VAN Z. (*confidentially*). They expect to-day, a young man here, a Mr. Van Zandt. He is a rich landed proprietor, and a suitor to the hand of Miss Livingstone. They don't know him by sight, and I have learned from an authentic source that he is not coming. You understand?

CHAS. (*delighted*). Capital fun! I'll personate him; it will be as good as a farce. But pardon me; to whom am I indebted for so much sympathy?

VAN Z. I am, like yourself, a nephew of Mr. Livingstone.

CHAS. A son of Mr. Otis perhaps?

VAN Z. Exactly. But please do not mention my name. I have just had a quarrel with uncle.

CHAS. Played him some little trick?

VAN Z. You have hit it.

CHAS. Ha, ha, ha! it seems to run in the family. Shake hands, cousin; and permit me to observe that you are a regular brick. (*shakes hands*)

VAN Z. Thank you. (*examines the hand of CHARLES*) I say, what a pretty ring you have there.

CHAS. (*takes a ring off his finger*). Pooh! only a keepsake from my cousin Emily; a souvenir of my first love—Calf love, you know. (*takes the ring off.*)

VAN Z. You had better not let her see it; she might recognize it. Shall I keep it for you to-day?

CHAS. By all means. Keep it as long as you like, my dear fellow. It isn't worth much, or I should have put it up the spout long ago.

VAN Z. Ha, ha, ha! Here they come, mind you play your cards well. You are Mr. Van Zandt; just returned from abroad. I am off

[*Exit, c. to L.*

CHAS. Never you fear. Adieu! I flatter myself I am up to snuff. I don't think I look very like a landed proprietor. Pshaw! it is all my uncle's fault for cutting down my allowance on the miserable plea that I spent too much money. Hush! here they come (*fascinating attitude, L.*)

Enter LIVINGSTONE and EMILY, R., both in elegant costumes.

LIVING. Ah! Where is he? (*to CHARLES*) My dear Mr. Van Zandt—How do you do? (*shakes hands*) Delighted to see you.

CHAS. Thank you, sir. Very well. (*aside*) How changed he is, the old fellow!

LIVING. What a striking resemblance between you and my dear old friend, the late Mr. Van Zandt. The very picture of him. (*shakes hands.*)

CHAS. So I have been told. (*aside*) Whew!

LIVING. Permit me to present my daughter to you. Miss Livingstone, Mr. Van Zandt. (*CHARLES and EMILY bow.*)

CHAS. Beautiful day, Miss. Fine weather for the turnips. (*aside*) I must talk like a landed proprietor.

EMILY (*bows coldly—aside*). What a fool! (*to LIVINGSTONE*) Oh, papa; how ugly he is!

LIVING. (*to EMILY*). Not at all, my dear, he is very handsome I think.

CHAS. (*aside*). She is evidently struck with my personal appearance, and does not know me at all.

EMILY (*aside*). Alas! how different from Charles!

LIVING. (*to CHARLES*). I suppose it is long since you were in this part of the country?

CHAS. Quite a number of years. You will hardly believe it, my dear sir, that on first seeing you I felt quite nervous. I believe the journey has made me feel a little faint. In point of fact, the mountain air is rather keen.

LIVING. Let me offer you some refreshment?

CHAS. (*q ickly*). Oh, dear, no! H'm, well, thank you. I think I *will* take a couple of chops, some fried potatoes, and anything you have handy; I am not particular.

LIVING. You shall have some lunch directly, and at six o'clock we dine. (*to EMILY*) You see he is frankness itself, not at all proud.

EMILY (*aside*). The horrid brute! (*converses with LIVINGSTONE in a low voice.*)

CHAS. (*aside*). Excellent! Only let me sit down with him to a good table, and I'll show him what I can do.

LIVING. My dear Mr. Van Zandt, come this way, and you shall try some of my dry Madeira.

CHAS. You are too kind. (*to EMILY*) Miss, I have the honor. (*bows.*)

[*Exeunt LIVINGSTONE and CHARLES, R.*

EMILY (*looks after them in disgust*). He hasn't said a single civil word to me, and there he goes to eat, to drink, perhaps to sleep. Ugh! he looks as if he snored. And this is the husband my father has destined for me instead of my handsome cousin. (*turns round and observes VAN ZANDT*) Ah!

Enter VAN ZANDT, L.

EMILY (*sharply*). You here yet! What do you want? How dare you appear before me?

VAN Z. (*grave'y*). I am about to depart, Miss Emily, and only came to bid you a last adieu.

EMILY (*stifling a sigh*). Good-by.

VAN Z. The presence of Mr. Van Zandt, the favored suitor, is in itself sufficient to drive me away. Oh, Emily, you have never loved me!

EMILY. Haven't I? It has all been your fault.

VAN Z. I own that I have been much to blame; but before I go, Emily, let me return this ring which you gave me in happier days. (*gives her CHARLES' ring.*)

EMILY (*with a sudden outburst*). My ring! you have it still? You have not given it away? Oh, Charles! I am so happy. I forgive you everything now. (*rushes into his arms.*)

VAN Z. (*aside*). She loves me. (*aloud*) My own dear Emily, are you really in earnest? but your father?

EMILY (*gayly*). Oh, never mind papa. He is so good and sensible, I can twist him round my little finger. But now you must retire for the present; I'll see you by-and-by.

VAN Z. Stay! I have a confession to make first. I am not the person you believe me to be; I am——

EMILY. Well, never mind just now. Somebody is coming. Now do go, or I shall be angry. (*shoves him out of door, L., after which she returns and remains in D L*) Ah! there is Mr. Van Zandt coming.

Enter CHARLES, door C. from R., picking his teeth.

CHAS. (*speaking to somebody off stage, R*). No ceremonies with me, my dear, sir. Do as you like; I'll smoke my cigar here. (*advances down stage without seeing EMILY, lights a cigar and smokes.*)

EMILY (*aside*). I suppose he will be magnanimously inclined now, after his luncheon. (*remains in door L. unseen by CHARLES.*)

CHAS. (*smoking*). I can afford to wait awhile now; I have eaten and drank like a prince, all incognito, of course. To think of him forking out his old madeira to treat me! Ha, ha, ha! He is quite taken with me; and after dinner, when he grows sentimental over the second bottle, I'll tell him all, throw myself at his feet, and implore his forgiveness. Imposing tableau! We embrace, shake hands, and take another drink. (*smokes.*)

EMILY (*approaching*). I think I'll speak to him now.

CHAS (*without seeing EMILY*). This is a splendid cigar. (*puffs away. EMILY retires a little up stage.*)

CHAS. I wish I could only get rid of my sentimental little cousin in a clever manner; then I am all right.

EMILY (*advancing timidly*). Mr. Van Zandt!

CHAS. (*starts*). Ah, Miss Livingstone; I beg your pardon. I didn't see you. Do you wish to speak with me?

EMILY. I do, sir; but I hardly dare——

CHAS. (*affably*) With reference, no doubt, to the intended matrimonial alliance between us. H'm!

EMILY. Which, I confess, would make me very unhappy. A previous attachment——

CHAS. (*off his guard*). You don't say so! (*gravely*) Speak, my dear young lady; open your heart to me without fear, as if I were your brother. (*aside*) Capital!

EMILY (*timidly*). I have for some years been engaged to my cousin, Charles, whom I love very dearly.

CHAS. (*aside*). Oh dear me! (*aloud*) Your cousin, Mr. Charles Fox, I presume?

EMILY. The same, sir.

CHAS. A remarkably handsome young man; elegant manners, brilliant conversation?

EMILY (*bashfully*). Yes, Mr. Van Zandt.

CHAS. (*aside*). She means me, of course. Poor girl! (*aloud*) And do you still love him?

EMILY. He has my sacred promise.

CHAS. Your constancy does you infinite honor; but are you sure that your cousin has been equally faithful? I knew him abroad, intimately, in fact; he is considered a very wild young man, and has committed many follies.

EMILY. I am aware of that, sir.

CHAS. He is deeply in debt; extravagant.

EMILY. I don't care—papa is rich.

CHAS. (*aside*). How fondly she clings to me. (*aloud*) He is said to be a gamester, a careless, dissipated youth—

EMILY (*quickly*). But he is so handsome, so eloquent.

CHAS. I agree with you there. (*aside*) I'll have to tell her all—there is no help for it. (*aloud*) Miss Livingstone, this is a very serious matter, and I will speak my mind to you quite candidly. I admit that your cousin, Mr. Fox, is a very charming young man; accomplished, brave, strikingly handsome, and so on; but the silly and romantic education which he had, has led him to commit many errors, very grave errors; one especially to which I was myself an unwilling witness.

EMILY. You alarm me! Do you allude to that mysterious matter at which Mr. Zacharias hinted?

CHAS. (*gravely*). Very likely. I have no doubt that your father will be grieved to hear of it, and you still more so. (*dries his eyes.*)

EMILY (*tremblingly*). Oh, speak, sir, speak! I'll do all I can for poor Charles.

CHAS. (*aside*). Poor thing! how she adores me! (*aloud*) You see, my dear Miss Livingstone, during his stay at Montreal, your cousin became acquainted with a very beautiful young lady—a certain Miss Pamela, connected with the ready-made clothing interest.

EMILY. What do I hear! a sewing girl?

CHAS. Why, yes. She made vests and pants, although her noble mind was panting for some more intellectual employment. In point of fact, she lived by her needle; (*makes a gesture as if sewing*) but she was not born to it. Oh, no! She descended from an old aristocratic Hibernian family, so old that nobody knew anything about it. For her to see Charles and love him, was the work of an instant. She was deeply, madly, in love with him; how could she help it? Charles was firm at first; but man is but human, you know. (*dries his eyes.*)

EMILY (*terrified*). What do I hear?

CHAS. I will throw a veil, a very thick veil, over the distressing incidents connected with that romantic attachment. Pamela was in despair, and spoke of putting an end to her chequered existence. She had already grasped the fatal weapon which was to plunge her into eternity—a pair of immense scissors—she told Charles that she must either be his—or die!

EMILY. Speak—proceed! What happened next?

CHAS. (*gravely, after a short pause*). She is still alive!

EMILY. Heavens! Has Charles married her?

CHAS. (*as before*). To save her from a still worse fate; yes. I was present at the wedding myself.

EMILY (*screaming*). Oh! the perfidious monster! the wretch! Papa, papa! Come here, I am going to faint—I am dying. Oh! (*faints in the arms of CHARLES.*)

CHAS. (*to EMILY*). Be calm—for Heaven's sake, don't blab! (*aside*) What an awful goose!

Enter LIVINGSTONE, C. from B.

LIVING. (*alarmed*). Goodness me! What is the matter, child? (*relieves CHARLES of his burden.*)

EMILY (*reviving*). Oh, papa! This is dreadful! my cousin Charles—the monster—the serpent, the hypocrite!

LIVING. Well, what about him?

EMILY (*as before*). He is married!

LIVING. Married? Serves him right!

CHAS. (*aside*). She has spoiled the whole game.

LIVING. (*supporting EMILY*). And whom has the fool married? Some lady of property, I hope; some respectable person?

EMILY (*indignantly*). Respectable! A horrid woman, connected with the ready-made clothing interest. (*sobs.*)

LIVING. (*furiously*). Then I will disown him forever. The fool! the idiot! I'll not pay a single dollar of his debts.

CHAS. (*aside, in despair*). Oh, Pamela, we are lost forever!

LIVING. (*pointing to CHARLES*). There, my dear, is the husband for you. And as for Charles, if ever he shows his face here again, I'll kick him out of the house.

CHAS. Oho! (*makes a move as if he would bolt, L.*)

LIVING. My dear Mr. Van Zandt, don't be alarmed. I was not speaking about you, you know.

EMILY. Hush, here he comes.

CHAS. He! Who is he?

EMILY (*to LIVINGSTONE*). Be calm, papa, and you shall see how I treat the wretch.

Enter VAN ZANDT, C. from L.

CHAS. (*to VAN ZANDT*). I say, old fellow, are you that cousin Charles of whom they are speaking?

VAN Z. I suppose so.

CHAS. (*aside, bewildered*). H'm! Has Pamela got another Charlie?

VAN Z. (*surprised*). What does this mean?

EMILY (*with dignity*). You shall know presently, sir. I owe it to myself, to my father, and to that gentleman, (*points to CHARLES*) to explain my sentiments frankly. You have been found out, sir.

VAN Z. You know all, at last?

EMILY. All I confess, sir, that I did love you once; at least I believed so—but I am now completely cured of my folly. The base perfidy, the dissimulation to which you have had recourse, in order to deceive the heart of a trusting, and unsuspecting girl.

VAN Z. (*deferentially*). Pray forgive me, Miss Livingstone, I am heartily sorry for what I have done, I humbly ask your pardon.

EMILY. You have my forgiveness, sir; and I will even return good for evil. (*to LIVINGSTONE*) My dear father; henceforth I will follow your advice, and obey all your wishes. I will accept the husband you have chosen for me. (*points to CHARLES*) But, in return let me ask one favor of you.

LIVING. Speak, my darling.

EMILY (*pointing to VAN ZANDT, who looks bewildered*). Forgive my poor, misguided cousin, as I do. Consent to receive the wife of Charles, and let him be happy with the woman he loves.

CHAS. (*aside*). Poor little Emily! How good she is!

VAN Z. (*to EMILY, surprised*). Who told you I was married?

EMILY (*pointing to CHARLES*). That gentleman, who was present at your wedding, and knows your wife.

CHAS. No, no, I beg your pardon. I merely said, Charles Fox was married.

VAN Z. (*quickly*). Charles Fox married? Thank Heaven! (*to LIVINGSTONE and EMILY*) Nay, do not look at me in this manner, I am not mad, I assure you. My dear Miss Livingstone, I am not your cousin Charles, as you supposed; I am the lover, the bridegroom, whom you so heartily detested, because your father selected him for you.

LIVING. }

EMILY. } (*all together*). Mr. Van Zandt!

CHAS. }

VAN Z. The same. Pardon me.

LIVING. And my precious nephew?

CHAS. (*kneels, looking sheepish*). I am here, uncle. (*OMNES evince surprise. Pause.*)

LIVING. (*threatens him*) Oh, you idle scoundrel!

EMILY. Papa dear, don't forget your promise.

VAN Z. We agreed to deceive you for awhile. He, to avoid a bride, —I, that I might win one. (*to EMILY*) Will you kindly forgive me, and permit me to hope that at some future day——

EMILY. I can hardly believe my senses. (*to CHARLES*) My poor cousin; it was you, then, whom I hated so cordially? (*shakes hands.*)

CHAS. So it appears, Emily. (*aside*) So much for first love!

EMILY (*to VAN ZANDT, bashfully*). And you, Mr. Van Zandt, whom I have never seen before——

VAN Z. (*smiling*). And yet you fancied that you had loved me in by-gone times?

EMILY (*giving him her hand*). I suppose I mistook the past for the future. (*bows.*)

Positions.

EMILY.

VAN ZANDT.

LIVINGSTONE

R.

CHARLES.

L.

CURTAIN.